

Florida State Parks Foundation Partners with Bob Ross Inc. for Happy Little Trees 5K to Benefit Pine Restoration

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation today announced a partnership with Bob Ross Inc., the company originally founded by the legendary artist behind “The Joy of Painting,” to expand the “Happy Little Trees 5K” program into Florida’s award-winning state parks.



The Michigan Department of Natural Resources launched the first Happy Little Trees 5K in 2019 as a fundraiser to support tree plantings in Michigan’s state parks. The program has since expanded to Indiana, South Carolina, Ohio and Wisconsin, with more states expected to join in 2024.

“

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Julia Gill Woodward, Florida State Parks Foundation CEO

Funds generated by the Florida State Parks Foundation through the Happy Little Trees 5K will directly benefit the Foundation’s Plant a Pine program, which has generated funding for more than 250,000 longleaf pine plantings across the state since 2020.

“Plant a Pine has become one of the Foundation’s signature programs, and the Happy Little Trees 5K is a perfect partner for our goal of restoring native longleaf pines across Florida,” said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. “This partnership is an

exciting new way to support Florida’s precious natural ecosystems while also honoring the legacy of Bob Ross.”

A play on one of Ross’ famous phrases – he was known for describing “happy little trees” in his

paintings – the Happy Little Trees 5K is a virtual event held each April between Earth Day and Arbor Day. Participants register online and complete their 5K in any outdoor setting of their choosing.

Participation is open to all, whether walking, running, hiking, skating, bicycling or using a mobility device. The fee to register is \$35 per person and includes a “Happy Little T-shirt,” a commemorative race bib and a finisher’s medal.

The Foundation will receive a portion of each registration fee designated for Florida State Parks. Participants choose which of the participating states to support at the time of registration.

Registration is open now.

Through the Plant a Pine program, the Foundation sets a goal each year to raise \$100,000 for longleaf pine plantings by Earth Day. Every \$1 generated corresponds with one longleaf pine seedling planted in a Florida State Park.

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The Florida State Parks Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy. The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests. This partnership was completed through Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

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